



ABOUT THE PROJECT

Manning's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) started receiving requests to accept donations of historic artifacts several years ago. After trying to find alternative solutions, they realized that they were the right (perhaps only) people to take on the task. The first donation included a collection from the local American Legion post when they were disbanding the local chapter. Through the help of the Department of Cultural Affairs, the HPC was able to utilize the services of a museum consultant to get some basic "how-to-collect" knowledge. A subsequent Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) grant allowed the commission to hire that consultant to teach local volunteers how to catalogue and preserve the items as well as what items to accept from a large private collector whose family had to liquidate part of his collection.

As this program continued to gain traction, the HPC members and staff saw the importance of tying the project into a bigger vision. Because of this, they saw to it that it made its way into the Great Places Visioning Plan of 2019. They also made sure it was front-of-mind for the newly-formed local AARP committee as they started forming action plans.

With collection well under-way and even more people coming forward with items to donate, how to display the items became a higher priority. The local HPC knew that, while the collection would grow to be large enough, there isn't the volunteer time or the funding for a stand-alone museum. So how could the HPC bring the unique cultural items to the people if they couldn't bring the people to the items? And the idea for historic displays throughout the community was born. With the help of an AARP grant, implementation is underway to have 18 historic displays throughout the community so that people can visit and enjoy the artifacts. Printed materials will allow for a self-guided tour to places that are already open and excited to welcome visitors—like City Hall, the Recreation Center, the Library, banks, and other businesses downtown. The displays will kick-off with an in-person tour event and local volunteers will continue to swap out the displays from time-to-time.

ABOUT AARP GRANT

The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative that helps communities become great places to live for residents of all ages. The program is intended to help communities make immediate improvements and jump-start long-term progress in support of residents of all ages.

Since the program's debut in 2017, AARP has awarded \$9.3 million through 800 grants. The projects have been completed across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative, which helps cities, towns, villages and rural areas become great places to live for residents of all ages. Learn more about this grant at www.aarp.org/communitychallenge.